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Leaders, troops share holiday

People were the focus of three of the Air Force's top leaders who spent Thanksgiving overseas visiting some of the service's deployed airmen — thanking them for their dedication and answering their questions.

Chief of Staff Gen. Michael E. Ryan and Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Jim Finch visited the 363rd Air Expeditionary Wing, Prince Sultan Air Base, Saudi Arabia; Ali Al-Sa-

lem and Al Jaber ABs in Kuwait; and Al-Dhafra, United Arab Emirates. Air Force Secretary F. Whitten Peters spent the holiday at Incirlik AB, Turkey; Araxos AB, Greece; and Tuzla AB, Bosnia.

"This operation here is every day ... every day a challenge, every day is crucial — this isn't peacekeeping, this is combat. I appreciate the focus and intensity it takes to make sure it runs well," General Ryan told the

wing's leadership at Prince Sultan. "I appreciate the focus and intensity it takes to make sure it runs well. Tell your folks who are taking care of the mission, it's much, much appreciated back home."

He attributed the success of Operation Southern Watch to "dedicated folks like you, who jump in and do the job so superbly. Thanks for what you do."

Both the general and Chief

Finch talked about the Expeditionary Air Force concept. Commenting on the transition to the EAF, Chief Finch talked about how changes at basic military training will help the Air Force accommodate the EAF.

"Since an airman's first exposure to deployments shouldn't be when he or she goes on one, we have developed Warrior Week to give them the

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NEWSBYTES

Manual available

The Air Force has released the 177-page Airman's Manual to bases across the service to educate the Total Force on fundamental skills needed for deployed environments.

The manual covers areas such as deployment procedures, host nation sensitivities, personal hygiene and anti-terrorism procedures. Color photos and graphics help illustrate the manual's step-by-step guidance. Airmen can get a copy of the manual through their unit orderly rooms, or electronically at:

<http://afm10-100.randolph.af.mil/airman/>

They can also e-mail the web site's administrators at airmans.manual@randolph.af.mil and provide feedback about any needed changes or additions.

AF readies for 10 percent cut in active medical officer corps

WASHINGTON — Air Force officials are extending force-shaping programs through the end of fiscal 2001 and offering separation incentives to selected nonline officers to help meet Defense Department medical rightsizing initiatives.

"The Air Force Medical Service needs to reduce their officer inventory by approximately 10 percent," said Lt. Col. Cheryl Dietrich, chief of military force structure plans.

"Phase III is an aggressive approach to achieving reductions through voluntary programs. At this point, there is no intention to use involuntary loss programs to meet the required reductions," she said. As in earlier phases of the program, line officers and enlisted members are not eligible for any force-shaping incentives.

Eligibility is targeted mostly toward specific skills and grades within the Air Force Medical Service, Colonel Dietrich said. Basic criteria for most programs remain the same as those in earlier phases; however, changes



Photo by Master Sgt. Kevin Hoeth

Medical teams practice their skills during a recent exercise at Hurlburt Field, Fla.

have been made to the eligible skills list.

"Phase III extends currently authorized force-shaping tools from Jan. 1, 2000, through Sept. 29, 2001," she said. These include temporary early retirement authority waivers for active-duty service commitments, commis-

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Letters to the editor

U.S. Air Force Online News publishes letters based on their appeal to an Air Force-wide audience each week. Send your letter to the U.S. Air Force Online News staff by completing the online form at <http://www.af.mil/newspaper/>

Due to the number of letters, not all letters can be published. Letters may be edited for grammar and length. Only letters accompanied by a valid name and email address will be considered.

Formula for disaster

Contrary to the "misinformation" campaign promulgated by the Defense Department, service members are not being led astray by incorrect or misleading information regarding anthrax. They are reacting to the documented failure of DOD to take care of the troops over the past half century . . . The military at the Pentagon have become so politicized they have lost sight of the troops on the front lines and have abdicated their responsibility to their military brethren. Consequently, the willingness of the troops to accept the DOD spin is dwindling rapidly. It is a formula for disaster in a military organization . . .

Lt. Col. Andy Sentgeorge
Retired, USAF Reserve

Bowing to pressure

I'm hoping news of the Air Force and Navy pulling their sponsorship of World Wrestling Federation TV programming will appear on this

web page. I find it sickening that our military would bow to the pressure of the PTC, an ultra-conservative group aimed at censoring what we watch . . . If these people do not like what the WWF is putting on TV, simply turn the channel. Pro wrestling's base audience is exactly the target group the Air Force should be aiming for . . .

Kevin Hall
St. Joseph, Mo.

(Editor's note: *The Air Force has stopped advertising on the World Wrestling Federation's television show, Smackdown! While it's true the program is very popular among some of the demographic groups from which the Air Force recruits, its content proved to be inconsistent with the messages we want to send to potential recruits and the American public. Additionally, we will review all proposed programming to ensure that TV shows featuring U.S. Air Force ads are consistent with the messages we want to send.*)

Service: a term you don't hear much anymore

By Lt. Col. Tom Henley
Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska

For just over three decades, I have been a member of the service. "Service" — now there's a term you don't hear too often anymore. Today you're more likely to hear, "I'm in the Air Force," or "I'm a squadron commander in the Air Force," or "I'm a crew chief," "I'm a pilot," "I'm a doctor," etc.

I can't really remember the last time I heard someone just remark, "I'm in the service." Have we, in fact, evolved into just a group of many occupations?

I'm not quite sure how or when the term, "service," developed. Let me share some perceptions, observations and opinions accumulated over the past 30 years of what the term has grown to mean to me.

"Service before self" is a recently coined phrase. Back in my youth, President Kennedy in one of his many famous speeches said: "... Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country." So, this concept has been around for awhile.

There was a draft when I first joined the service, but I was so moved by this philosophy of our young president that I

elected to first serve and then pursue college. Prior to the military, I thought I had served as a Boy Scout working toward Eagle or as a Christian in service to my faith. But it wasn't until my second year in the Air Force this meaning was truly driven home. I have since refined it, but the basics remain the same.

At that time, I was fortunate to have been nominated for Airman of the Year for 13th Air Force. As I sat outside the room waiting for my turn to face the board, I struck up a conversation with the airmen on my right and left. The one on the right had joined the military after serving two years with the Peace Corps in India, and the one on the left had served two years with a mission in Bolivia. It sure made my contributions as a hard-working crew chief seem pretty trivial. I had the misconception that being the best crew chief I could equaled service. Yet, both of these airmen received the same great deal as I did, and they went beyond — far beyond — what I had ever contributed.

The Air Force still seems to have a fair share of service-oriented folks. You see

them coaching Little League Baseball, ushering in our churches, etc. The list could go on and on of how our volunteers share their most precious commodity: time. I would theorize, if you saw these folks on the job they would be in the upper percentage of their peers and they would certainly be the busiest.

Another observation I have of our service-oriented folks is that they're people of great integrity. Speeding, driving under the influence or abusing a spouse or child are all unthinkable to them. You will never even see them working their leave outside the rules to their advantage. My perception is they probably pay more in taxes than they need to, contribute financially to good causes, tithe to their churches and do the very

simple things like joining our clubs. Not only do they accept and follow our society's laws but also our social rules.

Throughout my tenure, I've seen the counterfeiters, those who do it for a self-serving purpose such as a bullet for their performance report. Yet, I'm very proud to say I have served with hundreds of the "Real McCoy."

*... this
concept has
been around
for awhile.*



The standard bearers

Charter chiefs reflect on first E-9 promotions

By Senior Airman Robert Zoellner
55th Wing Public Affairs

OFFUTT AIR FORCE BASE, Neb. — Today is the 40th anniversary of the rank of chief master sergeant in the Air Force. Offutt celebrated the event with a Charter Chiefs reunion Nov. 19.

The Charter Chiefs are the 620 people who first obtained the rank of chief master sergeant.

Before 1958, the highest pay grade any enlisted person could attain was E-7. In 1958, because of promotion stagnation in all the services, Congress created the Career Compensation Act, which enabled the services to promote 2 percent of their enlisted force to the newly created rank of E-8 and 1 percent to E-9.

What this meant to the Air Force was adding the ranks of senior master sergeant and chief master sergeant.

Three Charter Chiefs attended the Offutt celebration and each had their own promotion story to tell.

"When they took the stage to tell their war stories their eyes lit right up," said Chief Master Sgt. Paul H. Lemke, 55th Communications Squadron support flight superintendent. "It was like they were back in 1959, as they traded barbs and

jabs among themselves and passed along praise and advice to the audience. Their wit, charm and sincerity really carried the evening."

Retired Chief Master Sgt. James Flaschenriem was an Army Air Corps corporal converted over to the new Air Force at that time. "I thought that when I made corporal I had hit the peak. I never expected to even make it a career, much less go up the ranks," he said.

"It was a different promotion than what it is today," recalled the youngest chief ever selected. "I was 31 years old; I had 11 years and five months time in service."

"If it weren't for the Air Force I would have probably ended up pumping gas at the corner filling station," Chief Flaschenriem said. "The service was for me — I kind of just fit in," he said.

Retired Chief Master Sgt. William Whitney was also in the first group of chiefs selected. "It was quite an honor to be one of the first people to make chief," he said.

Chief Whitney was in the 3rd Air Division at Andersen AFB, Guam, when he received an inside tip he was being promoted. "I had the list before my boss ever had it," he said.

The chief's boss had taken him to di-

vision headquarters to have his commander surprise him with the promotion. But it was to his boss's surprise when Chief Whitney reached into his pocket, pulled out a cigar and gave it to the general at the promotion announcement.

Retired Chief Master Sgt. Theodore Brewer, a B-17 gunner over Germany, never thought he would be a chief. "We didn't know whether we were gonna see the next day or not," he said.

This article available in its entirety online.



Colorado base turns active duty in 2000

PETERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Colo. - Buckley Air National Guard Base, Colo., will transfer base operating responsibilities to the active duty force with Air Force Space Command as the host unit, beginning Oct. 1, 2000.

The major reason for the change in roles from an ANG host to an active duty host is to transfer the responsibilities for providing base operating support and quality of life services from the Colorado Air National Guard to the active duty Air Force, which has had a growing presence on Buckley.

"We see this change as the preferred solution to a long and challenging period, characterized by a decreasing ability of the Air National Guard to meet the increasing demands of our base population,"

said Brig. Gen. Wayne Schultz, 140th Wing commander at Buckley. "We look forward to the benefits available through a more traditional relationship among the military community at Buckley."

First established as an auxiliary field to the former Lowry Air Force Base in 1942, Buckley ANGB is already an Air Force installation licensed by the Air Force to the state of Colorado for National Guard use.

Under current arrangements, the COANG provides infrastructure and quality of life services to their own organization and more than two dozen tenants, including an active duty military population that outnumbers the assigned Air National Guard.

This article available in its entirety online.



AF readies medical officer separations

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sioned service time, and time in grade; and the special line transfer program.

"This last program allows eligible officers to apply for a transfer to the line of the Air Force without losing constructive credit," she said. Officers must be in an eligible duty Air Force specialty, nondeferred, and have between two and seven years of active commissioned service.

Phase III also opens the Voluntary Separation Incentive and Special Separation Benefit programs to officers not yet eligible for early retirement. These provide a monetary incentive for volunteers to separate in the form of either an annuity or a lump sum payment. The last time VSI/SSB was used as a force reduction tool was FY95.

Eligible officers can apply through their military personnel flights beginning Jan. 4, 2000. Under Air Force policy, they may not request a separation or retirement date more than one year from the date of application, unless an exception is approved by the Air Force Personnel Center.

Personnel officials said applicants should not make any irrevocable commitments until their request is approved. "Programs as a whole, or any part of a program, can close with little or no notice, based on the needs of the Air Force," Colonel Dietrich said.

This article, including affected Air Force specialties, available in its entirety online.

Leaders spend holidays with troops

Continued from Page 1

training they need to deploy. It's held in week five of basic military training and, once the trainees graduate from Warrior Week, they earn the title of airman. So it holds a lot of meaning for them ...," Chief Finch said.

Talking about the challenge of EAF, General Ryan explained that one of the problems was continuity. "With Palace Tenure, we go in and select individuals," he said. "So, maybe in the supply function, there are individuals from seven or eight bases that rotate in at different times, so there is continuity, but not cohesion."

"I firmly believe that when you do these kinds of operations you ought to come and leave as teams, but how are we going to get the continuity?" he said. "The leadership here is going to have to come back to us and say that there are critical billets that must be filled for extended times. We'll do those outside of the AEF [Air Expeditionary Force] cycle to make sure that we have continuity."

General Ryan told members of the 363rd AEW that the Air Force has received additional manpower slots to help manage ops tempo. He explained that 3,000 additional slots were put into the budget to help com-

pensate for bases such as Prince Sultan that previously had been "taken out of hide" from bases around the Air Force instead of being funded separately.

"We went in heavily using the savings from headquarters drawdowns, and outsourcing and privatization to fund and manage these kinds of deployments that are constant deployments," he said. "You should see an infusion of manpower at the base level."

General Ryan also outlined the contributions Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard forces play in EAF. "I've leaned heavily on the

Guard and Reserve to be in this and they've volunteered and want to be here, but they'll be on a 14- or 15-day cycle in some cases. So when they come on these short tours, figure out a way to process them quickly and get them on the job," he said.

"They're taking up about 10 percent of our ops tempo worldwide, counted in number of bodies and number of positions that they fill. That's a good news story ... that's double what they were doing just a couple of years ago. If we can give them a lot of lead-time of when they need to come and participate, they'll do it in a heartbeat. They're part of this one team, one family."

This article available in its entirety online.



Photo by Senior Airman Matt Hannen

Gen. John P. Jumper, commander of U.S. Air Forces in Europe, (left) and Air Force Secretary F. Whitten Peters, receive a briefing on 39th Wing command post entry procedures from Amn. Marc Kjellin, an airmen in the 39th Security Forces Squadron, during a Nov. 24 tour of Incirlik Air Base, Turkey.



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